

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PA-01 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 DOE-11 H-01 INR-10
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5777
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 0469

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG, PEPR, IZ, TU
SUBJ: IRAQI-TURKISH RELATIONS AND THE
PIPELINE

REF: (A) BAGHDAD 0210, (B) BAGHDAD 030,

1. IN SHARP CONTRAST TO OUR IMPRESSIONS OF JUST A SHORT
TIME AGO (REFTELS), TURKISH REPS HERE NO LONGER
APPEAR PLEASED WITH CURRENT STATE OF RELATIONS WITH IRAQ.
IN FACT, THE VEHEMENCE OF THEIR VIEWS IS SOMEWHAT
DISTRESSING SINCE THEY WERE AMONG THE VERY FEW DIPLOMATS
IN BAGHDAD THAT THOUGHT MATTERS WERE GOING AT LEAST
REASONABLY WELL WITH THE HOST GOVERNMENT.

2. THE KEY FACTOR IN THE PRESENT SITUATION IS EVIDENTLY
THE PIPELINE, WHICH THE IRAQIS ARE OPENING AND CLOSING
AS THEIR MOOD CHANGES, ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCES. THE GOI
CLAIMS THAT THERE ARE TECHNICAL PROBLEMS CAUSING THE
INTERRUPTIONS, BUT THE TURKS APPEAR TO DOUBT THAT THERE
IS ANY TRUTH IN THE POSITION. THE ON-OFF, IN THEIR
VIEW, IS MERELY A MEANS OF SIGNALING DISSATISFACTION WITH
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THE GOT OVER ARREARAGES ON PAYMENT FOR PREVIOUS OIL
DELIVERIES.

3. THIS NOT ONLY VIOLATES THE AGREEMENT REACHED ON
HANDLING THE CLAIM, OUR TURKISH FRIENDS COMPLAIN, IT IS RAISING
HAVOC WITH THEIR ECONOMY SINCE THE PIPELINE IS NOT
SUPPLYING A REGULAR AND DEPENDABLE FLOW OF OIL, REGARDLESS

OF VOLUME. GOT IS BEING FORCED TO SEEK SPOT PRICE
SUPPLIES IN ORDER TO COVER THE SHORFALLS AND ALLOW
FOR FUTURE VARIATIONS IN DELIVERIES.

4. VIRTUALLY THROUGH GRITTED TEETH, TURKISH CHARGE
CASTIGATED IRAQIS FOR THEIR ACTIONS, POINTING OUT THAT
TURKEY IS THE ONLY FRIEND THEY HAVE IN THE AREA AND
CERTAINLY MERITS BETTER TREATMENT. HE ALSO STRESSED
THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAS NEVER EVEN
CONSIDERED TAKING ANY OF THE NUMEROUS RETALIATORY
MEASURES THAT PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES PROVIDE, E.G.
SHUTTING DOWN THE FLOW OF TRUCKS TRANSPORTING GOODS
FROM THE RAILWAY CARS BLOCKED AT THE SYRIAN BORDER.

5. COMMENT: OTHER SOURCES SUGGEST THAT IRAQI ACTION IS
DESIGNED TO PUT PRESSURE ON TURKEY TO PUT PRESSURE ON
SYRIA TO REOPEN THE RAILROAD. WHATEVER THE CAUSES,
IRAQ'S ACTION IS AN INTERESTING ILLUSTRATION OF ONE OF THE
PRINCIPAL AND MOST EFFECTIVE FACETS OF THE GOI'S FOREIGN
POLICY: THE ARDENT SEARCH FOR MORE COUNTRIES WITH
WHICH TO HAVE POOR RELATIONS.

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